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**THE PLANT QUARANTINE ACT (Act of AUGUST 20, 1912)**

[As Amended Through Public Law 106–170, Dec. 17, 1999]

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December 17, 1999

THE PLANT QUARANTINE ACT, ACT OF AUGUST 20, 1912<sup>1</sup>

AN ACT To regulate the importation of nursery stock and other plants and plant products; to enable the Secretary of Agriculture to establish and maintain quarantine districts for plant diseases and insect pests; to permit and regulate the movement of fruits, plants, and vegetables therefrom, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. [7 U.S.C. 154, 155] IMPORTATION OF NURSERY STOCK.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—No person shall—

(1) import or enter into the United States any nursery stock; or

(2) accept delivery of any nursery stock moving from any foreign country into or through the United States;

unless the movement is made in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary of Agriculture may promulgate to prevent dissemination into the United States of plant pests, plant diseases, or insect pests.

(b) REGULATIONS.—The regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture to implement subsection (a) may include regulations requiring that nursery stock moving into or through the United States—

(1) be accompanied by a permit issued by the Secretary of Agriculture prior to the movement of the nursery stock;

(2) be accompanied by a certificate of inspection issued, in a manner and form required by the Secretary of Agriculture, by appropriate officials of the country or State from which the nursery stock is to be moved;

(3) be grown under postentry quarantine conditions by or under the supervision of the Secretary of Agriculture for the purposes of determining whether the nursery stock may be infested with plant pests or insect pests, or infected with plant diseases, not discernible by port-of-entry inspection; and

(4) if the nursery stock is found to be infested with plant pests or insect pests or infected with plant diseases, be subject to remedial measures the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be necessary to prevent the spread of plant pests, insect pests, or plant diseases.

SEC. 2. [7 U.S.C. 156] That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury promptly to notify the Secretary of Agriculture of the arrival of any nursery stock at port of entry; that the person receiving such stock at port of entry shall, immediately upon entry and before such stock is delivered for shipment or removed from the port of entry, advise the Secretary of Agriculture

<sup>1</sup>This Act must be cited as the Act of August 20, 1912 (37 Stat. 315, chapter 308; 7 U.S.C. 151 et seq.). It is only commonly known as the “Plant Quarantine Act” or the “Nursery Stock Quarantine Act”.

or, at his direction, the proper State, Territorial, or District of the State or Territory or the District to which such nursery stock is destined, or both, as the Secretary of Agriculture may elect, of the name and address of the consignee, the nature and quantity of the stock it is proposed to ship, and the country and locality where the same was grown. This section does not apply to nursery stock that is imported or entered from a country or a region of a country that the Secretary of Agriculture designates, pursuant to procedures set forth in such regulations as the Secretary may promulgate, as exempt from the requirements of this section.

SEC. 3. [7 U.S.C. 157] That no person shall import or offer for entry into the United States any nursery stock unless the case, box, package, crate, bale, or bundle thereof shall be plainly and correctly marked to show the general nature and quantity of the contents, the country and locality where the same was grown, the name and address of the shipper, owner, or person shipping or forwarding the same, and the name and address of the consignee.

SEC. 4. [7 U.S.C. 158] That no person shall ship or deliver for shipment from one State or Territory or District of the United States into any other State or Territory or District any such imported nursery stock the case, box, package, crate, bale, or bundle whereof is not plainly marked so as to show the general nature and quantity of the contents, the name and address of the consignee, and the country and locality where such stock was grown, unless and until such imported stock has been inspected by the proper official of a State, Territory, or District of the United States.

SEC. 5. [7 U.S.C. 159] That whenever the Secretary of Agriculture shall determine that the unrestricted importation of any plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products not included by the term "nursery stock" as defined in section six of this act may result in the entry into the United States or any of its Territories or Districts of injurious plant diseases or insect pests, he shall promulgate his determination, specifying the class of plants and plant products the importation of which shall be restricted and the country and locality where they are grown, and thereafter, and until such promulgation is withdrawn, such plants and plant products imported or offered for import into the United States or any of its Territories or Districts shall be subject to all the provisions of the foregoing sections of this act.

SEC. 6. [7 U.S.C. 152.] That for the purpose of this act the term "nursery stock" shall include all field-grown florists' stock, trees, shrubs, vines, cuttings, grafts, scions, buds, fruit pits and other seeds of fruit and ornamental trees or shrubs, and other plants and plant products for propagation, except field, vegetable, and flower seeds, bedding plants, and other herbaceous plants, bulbs, and roots.

SEC. 7. [7 U.S.C. 160] That whenever, in order to prevent the introduction into the United States of any tree, plant, or fruit disease or of any injurious insect, new to or not theretofore widely prevalent or distributed within and throughout the United States, the Secretary of Agriculture shall determine that it is necessary to forbid the importation into the United States of any class of nursery stock or of any other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products from a country or locality

where such disease or insect infestation exists, he shall promulgate such determination, specifying the country and locality and the class of nursery stock or other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products which, in his opinion, should be excluded. Following the promulgation of such determination by the Secretary of Agriculture, and until the withdrawal of the said promulgation by him, the importation of the class of nursery stock or of other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products specified in the said promulgation from the country and locality therein named, regardless of the use for which the same is intended, is hereby prohibited; and until the withdrawal of the said promulgation by the Secretary of Agriculture, and notwithstanding that such class of nursery stock, or other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products be accompanied by a certificate of inspection from the country of importation, no person shall import or offer for entry into the United States from any country or locality specified in such promulgation, any of the class of nursery stock or of other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products named therein, regardless of the use for which the same is intended: *Provided*, That the quarantine provisions of this section, as applying to the white-pine blister rust, potato wart, and the Mediterranean fruit fly, shall become and be effective upon the passage of this Act.

SEC. 8. [7 U.S.C. 161] That the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized and directed to quarantine any State, Territory, or District of the United States, or any portion thereof, when he shall determine that such quarantine is necessary to prevent the spread of a dangerous plant disease or insect infestation, new to or not theretofore widely prevalent or distributed within and throughout the United States; and the Secretary of Agriculture is directed to give notice of the establishment of such quarantine to common carriers doing business in or through such quarantined area, and shall publish in such newspapers in the quarantined area as he shall select notice of the establishment of quarantine. That no person shall ship or offer for shipment to any common carrier, nor shall any common carrier receive for transportation or transport, nor shall any person carry or transport from any quarantined State or Territory or District of the United States, or from any quarantined portion thereof, into or through any other State or Territory or District, any class of nursery stock or any other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products, or any class of stone or quarry products, or any other article of any character whatsoever, capable of carrying any dangerous plant disease or insect infestation, specified in the notice of quarantine except as hereinafter provided. That it shall be unlawful to move, or allow to be moved, any class of nursery stock or any other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products, or any class of stone or quarry products or any other article of any character whatsoever, capable of carrying any dangerous plant disease or insect infestation, specified in the notice of quarantine hereinbefore provided, and regardless of the use for which the same is intended, from any quarantined State or Territory or District of the United States or quarantined portion thereof, into or through

any other State or Territory or District, in manner or method or under conditions other than those prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture. That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of Agriculture, when the public interests will permit, to make and promulgate rules and regulations which shall permit and govern the inspection, disinfection, certification, and method and manner of delivery and shipment of the class of nursery stock or of any other class of plants, fruits, vegetables, roots, bulbs, seeds, or other plant products, or any class of stone or quarry products, or any other article of any character whatsoever, capable of carrying any dangerous plant disease or insect infestation, specified in the notice of quarantine hereinbefore provided, and regardless of the use for which the same is intended, from a quarantined State or Territory or District of the United States, or quarantined portion thereof, into or through any other State or Territory or District; and the Secretary of Agriculture shall give notice of such rules and regulations as hereinbefore provided in this section for the notice of the establishment of quarantine: *Provided*, That until the Secretary of Agriculture shall have made a determination that such a quarantine is necessary and has duly established the same with reference to any dangerous plant disease or insect infestation, as hereinabove provided, nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent any State, Territory, Insular Possession, or District from promulgating, enacting, and enforcing any quarantine, prohibiting or restricting the transportation of any class of nursery stock, plant, fruit, seed, or other product or article subject to the restrictions of this section, into or through such State, Territory, District, or portion thereof, from any other State, Territory, District, or portion thereof, when it shall be found, by the State, Territory, or District promulgating or enacting the same, that such dangerous plant disease or insect infestation exists in such other State, Territory, District, or portion thereof: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby authorized, whenever he deems such action advisable and necessary to carry out the purposes of this act, to cooperate with any State, Territory, or District, in connection with any quarantine, enacted or promulgated by such State, Territory, or District, as specified in the preceding proviso: *Provided further*, That any nursery stock, plant, fruit, seed, or other product or article, subject to the restrictions of this section, a quarantine with respect to which shall have been established by the Secretary of Agriculture under the provisions of this act shall, when transported to, into, or through any State, Territory, or District, in violation of such quarantine be subject to the operation and effect of the laws of such State, Territory, or District, enacted in the exercise of its police powers, to the same extent and in the same manner as though such nursery stock, plant, fruit, seed, or other product or article had been produced in such State, Territory, or District, and shall not be exempt therefrom by reason of being introduced therein in original packages or otherwise.

SEC. 9. [7 U.S.C. 162] That the Secretary of Agriculture shall make and promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of this act.

SEC. 10. [7 U.S.C. 163, 164, 164a] That any person who knowingly violates any provision of this Act or any rule or regulation

promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture under this Act, or who knowingly forges or counterfeits any certificate provided for in this Act on or in any such rule or regulation, or who, knowingly and without the authority of the Secretary, uses, alters, defaces, or destroys any such certificate shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not exceeding \$5,000, by imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both. Any person who violates any such provision, rule, or regulation, or who forges or counterfeits any such certificate, or who, without the authority of the Secretary, uses, alters, defaces, or destroys any such certificate, may be assessed a civil penalty by the Secretary not exceeding \$1,000. The Secretary may issue an order assessing such civil penalty only after notice and an opportunity for an agency hearing on the record. Such order shall be treated as a final order reviewable under chapter 158 of title 28, United States Code. The validity of such order may not be reviewed in an action to collect such civil penalty. It shall be the duty of the United States attorneys diligently to prosecute any violations of this act which are brought to their attention by the Secretary of Agriculture or which come to their notice by other means.

That any employee of the Department of Agriculture, authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture to enforce the provisions of this act and furnished with and wearing a suitable badge for identification, who has probable cause to believe that any person coming into the United States, or any vehicle, receptacle, boat, ship, or vessel, coming from any country or countries or moving interstate, possesses, carries, or contains any nursery stock, plants, plant products, or other articles the entry or movement of which in interstate or foreign commerce is prohibited or restricted by the provisions of this act, or by any quarantine or order of the Secretary of Agriculture issued or promulgated pursuant thereto, shall have power to stop and, without warrant, to inspect, search, and examine such person, vehicle, receptacle, boat, ship, or vessel, and to seize, destroy, or otherwise dispose of, such nursery stock, plants, plant products, or other articles found to be moving or to have been moved in interstate commerce or to have been brought into the United States in violation of this act or of such quarantine or order.

SEC. 11. [7 U.S.C. 151, 153] That the word "person" as used in this act shall be construed to import both the plural and the singular, as the case demands, and shall include corporations, companies, societies, and associations. When construing and enforcing the provisions of this act, the act, omission, or failure of any officer, agent, or other person acting for or employed by any corporation, company, society, or association, within the scope of his employment or office, shall in every case be also deemed to be the act, omission, or failure of such corporation, company, society, or association as well as that of the person.

SEC. 12. [Repealed by section 402(a)(13) of Public Law 88-448 (78 Stat. 493)]

SEC. 13. That there is hereby appropriated, out of the moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to be expended as the Secretary of Agriculture may direct, for the purposes and objects of this act, the sum of \$25,000.

SEC. 14. That this act shall become and be effective from and after the first day of October, nineteen hundred and twelve, except as herein otherwise provided.

SEC. 15. [7 U.S.C. 167] That in order further to control and eradicate and to prevent the dissemination of dangerous plant diseases and insect infections and infestations no plant or plant products for or capable of propagation, including nursery stock, hereinafter referred to as plants and plant products, shall be moved or allowed to be moved, shipped, transported, or carried by any means whatever into or out of the District of Columbia, except in compliance with such rules and regulations as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture as hereinafter provided. Whenever the Secretary of Agriculture, after investigation, shall determine that any plants and plant products in the District of Columbia are infested or infected with insect pests and diseases and that any place, articles, and substances used or connected therewith are so infested or infected, written notice thereof shall be given by him to the owner or person in possession or control thereof, and such owner or person shall forthwith control or eradicate and prevent the dissemination of such insect pest or disease and shall remove, cut, or destroy such infested and infected plants, plant products, and articles and substances used or connected therewith, which are hereby declared to be nuisances, within the time and in the manner required in said notice or by the rules and regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture. Whenever such owner or person cannot be found, or shall fail, neglect, or refuse to comply with the foregoing provisions of this section, the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby authorized and required to control and eradicate and prevent dissemination of such insect pest or disease and to remove, cut, or destroy infested or infected plants and plant products and articles and substances used or connected therewith, and the United States shall have an action of debt against such owner or persons for expenses incurred by the Secretary of Agriculture in that behalf. Employees of the Federal Horticultural Board are hereby authorized and required to inspect places, plants, and plant products and articles and substances used or connected therewith whenever the Secretary of Agriculture shall determine that such inspections are necessary for the purposes of this section. For the purpose of carrying out the provisions and requirements of this section and of the rules and regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture made hereunder, and the notices given pursuant thereto, employees of the Federal Horticultural Board shall have power with a warrant to enter into or upon any place and open any bundle, package, or other container or plants or plant products whenever they shall have cause to believe that infections or infestations of plant pests and diseases exist therein or thereon, and when such infections or infestations are found to exist, after notice by the Secretary of Agriculture to the owner or person in possession or control thereof and an opportunity by said owner or person to be heard, to destroy the infected or infested plants or plant products contained therein. The police court or the municipal court of the District of Columbia shall have power, upon information supported by oath or affirmation showing probable cause for believing that there exists in any place, bundle, package, or other container in the District of Columbia any plant



or plant product which is infected or infested with plant pests or disease, to issue warrants for the search for and seizure of all such plants and plant products. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of Agriculture, and he is hereby required, from time to time, to make and promulgate such rules and regulations as shall be necessary to carry out the purposes of this section, and any person who shall move or allow to be moved, or shall ship, transport, or carry, by any means whatever, any plant or plant products from or into the District of Columbia, except in compliance with the rules and regulations prescribed under this section, shall be punished, as is provided in section 10 of this act.